

Christ-Followers Should Be Marked by Kindness

“and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

Recently, while visiting two of our BCM meetings I was treated with unusual kindness by students which cause me to spend some time thinking about why some Christians aren't very kind? Kindness is an expression of the Holy Spirit's presence in a believer's life (Galatians 5:22-23). If a Christ-follower is not kind there is something wrong. Kindness is to be much more than a reciprocal act. We are not kind to others because they have been kind to us (Matthew 5:46-47). We are kind to people because that is the nature of Christ in us. What does it mean to be kind anyway? Kindness is embodied in Jesus' teaching to treat others as you want to be treated (Matthew 7:12). Kindness is willful conversation and action that enables another to feel accepted and appreciated. One can act that way, even if it means “turning the other cheek,” because we as Christ's disciples have received indescribable kindness from God (Ephesians 2:4-7). Being kind to others is one effective way we are act like salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16).

Kindness can be our response when we are intentional to do so, but that is not the same thing as producing the spiritual fruit of kindness. We don't just act kind. We spiritually grow to BE kind because our character is becoming more and more molded and marked by the Holy Spirit. How we respond to those “unlovable” people in our lives will give us insight into our character. I believe we will exhibit kindness in word and deed when we learn to “practice his presence” (“Practicing the Presence of God” by Brother Lawrence).